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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/781,820	02/20/2004	Akira Asaoka	H64-163097M/MNN	3957
21254 7590 04/27/2007 MCGINN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW GROUP, PLLC 8321 OLD COURTHOUSE ROAD SUITE 200 VIENNA, VA 22182-3817			EXAMINER WALSH, RYAN D	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2852	
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS		04/27/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/781,820

Applicant(s)

ASAOKA ET AL.

Examiner

Ryan D. Walsh

Art Unit

2852

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 February 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5-7, 9, 10, 15-17, 19 and 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4, 8, 11-14 and 18 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 06 February 2007 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

Claims 11-14 are objected to because of the following informalities:

Regarding claims 11-14, the claimed, "rotatable shaft" is objected to because rotatable shaft was previously set forth that is different from the claimed "rotatable shaft" now being claimed. The rotatable shaft in claims 11-14 is ref. # 6 of applicants invention. The previous rotatable shaft is ref. # 11.

Claim 11 is also objected to for reciting a "rotatable frame". It appears as though applicant should replace "frame" with --shaft--, keeping in mind the objection of claims 11-14 set forth above.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

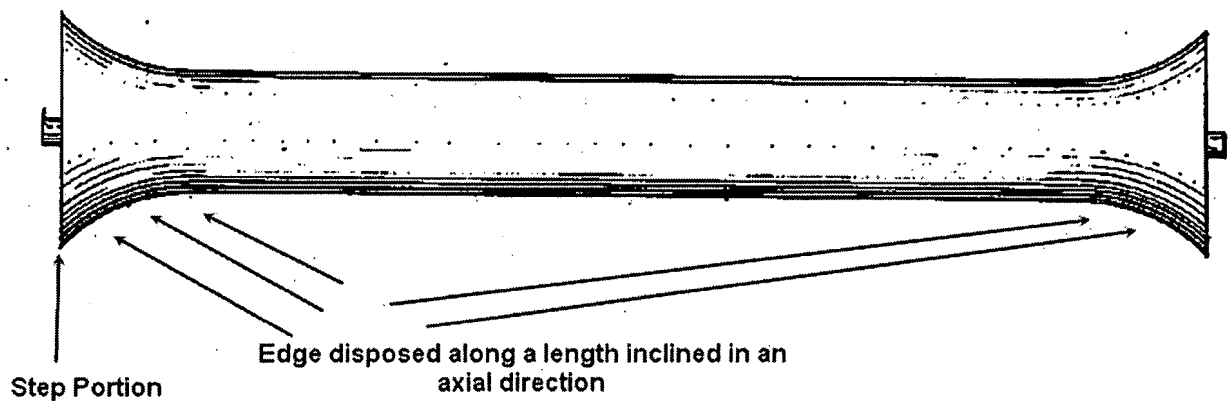
Claims 1-3, 5-7, 9-10, 15-17 and 19-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sekino et al. (US Pat. # 5,172,175), hereinafter referred to as Sekino, in view of Conlon, Jr. (US Pat. # 4,170,175), hereinafter referred to as Conlon.

Regarding claims 1, 2, 5, 15 and 20, Sekino teaches, "A belt unit of an electrophotographic printing apparatus, comprising: two rollers (Fig. 3, ref. #'s 41 and 43) for supporting a belt (40) so as to be substantially in parallel with each other; two

frames (46) for supporting the rollers and attached to opposite ends of one of the rollers respectively so as to be perpendicular to the rollers; two support members (52) attached to opposite ends of the other roller so as to be perpendicular to the rollers; two elastic members (Col. 7, Ln. 12-15) interposed between the two support members and the two frames respectively; and a belt mounting guide (42) provided between the two frames; wherein the belt mounting guide includes a rotating shaft disposed in parallel with the rollers, and an edge portion (edge's of the roller) disposed along a length of the rotating shaft." Sekino does not teach, "the edge portion being inclined relative to an axial direction of the rotating shaft, wherein a step portion is provided at one end of the edge portion of the belt mounting guide and in a position where the belt travels normally." However, Conlon teaches the deficiencies of Sekino (Fig. 3, and cutout below).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Sekino's invention to include the edge portion being inclined relative to an axial direction of the rotating shaft and wherein a step portion is provided at one end of the edge portion of the belt mounting guide and in a position where the belt travels normally.

The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to modify Sekino's invention in a manner described above for at least the purpose of preventing "walks" or "creeps" of the belt causing misalignment or even escape of the belt from the roller.



Regarding claims 3, 6 and 17, Sekino teaches, "wherein when the belt is mounted, the belt mounting guide is located to be higher than a frame that forms a slot portion included in an apparatus body in which the belt unit is mounted (see Fig.'s 3 and 5, ref. # 42 is in a slot located higher than a bottom portion of the frame 46)."

Regarding claim 7, Sekino teaches, "wherein the belt mounting guide is rotatably mounted to the two frames (42 on 46 in Figure 3)."

Regarding claim 9, Sekino teaches, "wherein the belt mounting guide is disposed between the two rollers (42 is between 41 and 43)."

Regarding claim 10, Sekino teaches, "wherein the two rollers comprise a drive roller (41) and a tension roller (43)."

Regarding claim 16, Sekino teaches, "wherein the rotating shaft (42) is positionable between parallel frame members (46) of the belt unit."

Regarding claim 19, Sekino teaches, "wherein the belt mounting guide (42) is rotatable between the parallel frame members (46)."

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 4, 8, 11-14, and 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Note: Claims 11-14 are also objected to above.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-6 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

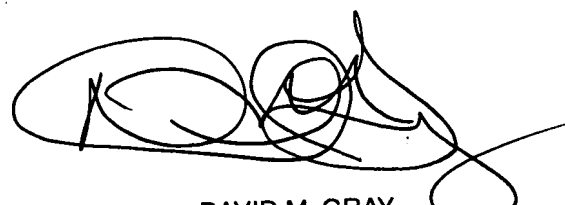
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ryan D. Walsh whose telephone number is 571-272-2726. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00am-4:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Gray can be reached on 571-272-2119. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Ryan D. Walsh
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 2852



DAVID M. GRAY
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER